

Early Life of Elizabeth Garrett

Redfield Georgia B.

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Early Life of Elizabeth Garrett

Given In An Interview.

Feb. 9-1937

"As an 'old-timer'-as you say-I will be glad to tell you anything you would like to hear of my life in our Sunshine State-New Mexico"; said Elizabeth Garrett in an appreciated interview graciously granted this writer. Appreciated because undue publicity of her splendid achievements and of her private life, is avoided by this famous but unspoiled musician and composer.

"My father, Pat Garrett came to Fort Sumner New Mexico in 1878. He and my mother, who was Polinari Gutierrez Gutierrez , were married in Fort Sumner.

"I"Was born at Eagle Creek, up above the Ruidoso in the White Mountain country.

"We moved to Roswell (five miles east) while I was yet an infant. I have never been back to my birthplace but believe a lodge has been built on our old mountain home site.

"You ask what I think of the Elizabeth Garrett bill presented at this session of the legislature? To grant me a monthly payment during my lifetime for what I have accomplished of the State Song, I think was a beautiful tho'ught.

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"I owe appreciation and thanks to New Mexico people and particularly to Grace T. Bear and to the "Club o' Ten" as the originators of the idea. If this bill is passed New Mexico will be the first state that has given such evidence of appreciation (in such a distinctive way) to a composer & autho'r of a State Song.

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"Even if never passed the thought alone will be an inspiration to me to work harder. If it is granted, then I will give up my music classes and devote all my time in the future in producing more [?] things that I hope will be classed along with my State Song-"O Fair New Mexico.

"My childhood days on the [?] ranch near Roswell were happy-neither constricted nor restricted. I led an active outdoor life, rode horseback, and doing did all things any child loves to do.

"One of my earliest recollections of composing, was when swinging on a limb of an old apple tree. I made up a song about the apple blossoms and the bees that were buzzing around the trees. I never catch the odor, of apple blossoms that I don't feel again the leafy shadows, under the trees and the bright sun, and hear the songs of the birds as they called to each other from tree to tree in the orchard.

"Quite frequently," said Elizabeth Garrett, "my father had to bring harmony with a gun. I try to do so by carrying a tune."

Elizabeth Garrett spoke in praise and affection of her brave father, who had accomplished much as a peace officer, who is honored to day above all men for freeing New Mexico from the outlaw and murderer - Billy the Kid.

In writing of Elizabeth Garrett her friend Mildred Marshall [?] says:

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"At the age of six Elizabeth was placed in a school for the blind in Austin Texas. Here her musical education was begun. As a very small child she [?] showed extraordinary musical talent. This she inherited from her mother who descended from the Spanish. Graduating with honors she continues her musical education under 3 the best teachers in Chicago and New York, making her way by her compositions and teaching. her voice is a dramatic soprano.

"When you hear Elizabeth Garrett sing - the State Song - O Fair New Mexico, with her own people joining in the chorus you are completely carried away.

"Then to listen to her as she sings the great music of the Old Masters on the birth , death , and resurrection , of the Savior is like a benediction.

"Appearing in all the large cities in the United States Elizabeth Garrett has been enthusiastically recieved. She has been much feted. No matter how much they fate her they can not keep her [?] beyond a certain time, for "daughter of the West" that she is, she always returns to her beloved New Mexico. "

New Mexico is proud of Elizabeth Garrett and Roswell people feel she belongs to them for here she has built her "Dream House" and here she will live her life, and write in song and music stories of her people and the land she loves.

Sources Of Information

Interview-Elizabeth Garrett-Roswell New Mexico, And book "Women Who Man Our Clubs"

by Mildred Marshall [?]

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Checked By Elizabeth Garrett

Musician Composer And Autho'r of State Song

O Fair New Mexico Elizabeth Garrett C18-6/5/41-N. Mex.

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Elizabeth Garrett

Autho'r And Composer of State Song

O Fair new Mexico

(Program at the Prison) Fools, they!! They call her blind! They call her blind; yet could she lead A tho'usand soul - sick man From cold gray stones and make them heed The song of wind and rain, From gloomy cell and dewy mead To sun and stars and sky, And show the message all could read, Of love and peace and hope, They call her blind! They call her blind, yet she could see A neighbor's heart in each A heart that neither Pharisee Nor Levite tried to reach. The wine of song she poured like The oil of love she bore And showed to men what men could be thro'ugh faith and hope and truth. They call her blind! They call her blind, yet she could paint A message each could see, A clarion call for tho'se who faint In notes of sweetest song; And when they told her of the taint The men before her bore, She would not see, but like the saint, Saw faith and hope and love. We call her blind! We! Fools!

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The verses above written by "V.M.67616" in appreciation of Elizabeth Garrett and her singing to prisoners in Sing Sing, expresses, as no other writer has been able to express, the unusual gift of seeing possessed by this wonderful woman-blind since early childhood.

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Her sympathetic understanding of human nature, seeing good in all, as she did the prisoners she cheered with song and music, has won for her a multitude of friends who love her for this trait of character, as well as for her ability as a musician autho'r and composer.

To really know Elizabeth Garrett New Mexico's outstanding musician and composer of the State Song - O Fair New Mexico, and many other songs of the southwest, one should see her in her home.

Her five room stucco adobe house-blue trim on the door and window sills-located at 102 So. Lea Avenue, has all the color and atmosphere of the early-day Spanish architecture, and in interior decorations, and furnishings.

The living room is bright and cheering - no shades drawn here. There is a soft blending of bright colors-gold predominating-in draperies, rugs, and pictures. Flowers are everywhere.

The three hobbies of Elizabeth Garrett, are the theater, swimming and housekeeping, As a housekeeper she is unexcelled. There are no, more highly polished floors, shining windows, or beautiful beautifully ironed garments in Roswell, than are found any day or hour in Elizabeth Garrett's home.

During a visit by the writer , Jerry - the Canary - on his swing was enjoying the sunshine from a window. Smutty - the cat-was let in by his mistress and introduced.

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"I am to have more pets," said Elizabeth Garrett, " a parrot-my mothers-and a wonderful guide dog is to be loaned to me, from a dog training school in Morristown New Jersey, 3 where they train intelligent dogs to be guides and lend them, even for a lifetime of use, but they never sell an animal. I am in sympathy with thier not selling, as they there might be some that fall into unkind hands."

We seated ourselves before the fire in a corner fireplace, which spoke plainly as being the center (corner) of interest in this house. There are symbol designs on andirona and Thunder Bird on the door-knocker both were made by Colonel ("Scotty") Andrew for this home and were gifts of friends-Mr Joe Strong and his sister Mrs. Peter Nelson.

" 'Most everything in my home are gifts from friends and there are many from my dearly loved sister-Pauline who lives at Las Cruces.'" The gentle touch of seeing hands showed me each prized article. A hand painted tray, "Spanish Seniorita"-work of an artist friend-had the place of honor over the fireplace. A splendid painting San il Defonzo, by Hazel Hanson, a framed western picture and poem "Out In New Mexico" by Annie Laurie Snorf, a Spanish vase, inlaid coffee table, stools, chairs, lamps, and bright colored Navajo rugs. All these gifts for this "Dream House"-longed for, planned for, and at last came true in all it's quaint artistry of construction.

The house is dedicated to Elizabeth Garretts beloved mother-Polinaria Cutierez Cutiernez Garrett, who passed on to a home in the Great Beyond 2 weeks after a visit to her daughter in Roswell.

During the visit Mrs. Garrett as a widow of Pat Garrett, famous pioneer peace officer of the southwest, was the interesting guest of honor at the Old Timer's Day Celebration of October 1936. Mrs. Garrett was proclaimed "Queen Of Old Timers" 4 for that day.

Elizabeth Garrett ' s house planned by her with the assistance of Frank Stanhardt , architict , is a revelation of the unusual character and individuality of a true "Daughter of

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the West” who has gone far, accomplished much, and is one of the most beloved women of New Mexico, just as her father Pat Garrett was one of the most beloved of men.

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